



National Cemetery Administration

Program Description

The National Cemetery Administration (NCA) Operations and Maintenance account funds the operation of 125 national cemeteries and 33 other cemeterial installations, as well as their maintenance as national shrines. It also directly funds the costs for NCA to administer four related programs: the State Cemetery Grant program, the Headstone and Marker program, the Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) program and Outer Burial Receptacle (OBR) reimbursements. The costs of producing and mailing the PMCs are also funded from this appropriation.

The Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs is responsible for the overall management and direction of the National Cemetery Administration. The Under Secretary is supported in this role by staffs at both field and headquarters activities.

Summary of Budget Request

The National Cemetery Administration requests \$160,733,000 and 1,589 FTE for Operations and Maintenance in 2007. This will provide a net increase of \$11,135,000 in budget authority and 23 FTE over the 2006 current estimate level.

Workloads continue to grow at existing cemeteries, and additional funding for 23 FTE, contract maintenance, and supplies is essential to maintain existing service levels, which is NCA's highest priority. These additional requirements, plus costs for pay raise and benefits increases for current staffing, and for general non-payroll inflation total \$7,555,000 in 2007.

This budget requests \$3,580,000 for an increased level of contracting initiatives to address deferred maintenance needs. Improvements in the appearance of burial grounds are required for NCA to fulfill its commitment to maintain our national cemeteries as national shrines. These additional resources are directly linked to the achievement of Objective 4.5, which is to ensure that national cemeteries are shrines dedicated to preserving our Nation's history, nurturing patriotism, and honoring the service and sacrifice veterans have made. This increase in funding will allow

NCA to reduce the gap between current performance and its strategic performance targets for cemetery appearance. For example, the percent of headstones and markers that meet cleanliness standards will increase from 74 percent in 2006 to 77 percent in 2007.

<i>Appropriation Highlights</i> (dollars in thousands)					
	2005	2006		2007	Increase(+) / Decrease(-)
	Actual 1/	Budget Estimate	Current 2/ Estimate	Estimate	
Average employment	1,523	1,566	1,566	1,589	+23
Funding:					
Field Activities:					
Cemeterial programs	\$109,118	\$118,436	\$120,010	\$126,915	+\$6,905
Memorial programs	4,929	4,981	5,085	5,229	+144
Operations Support Center ...	5,916	5,723	6,119	6,307	+188
Headquarters:					
Central Office	19,701	21,228	14,729	15,175	+446
Memorial Service Networks	6,874	6,236	7,069	7,264	+195
Total obligations	\$146,538	\$156,604	\$153,012	\$160,890	+\$7,878
Reimbursements (-)	-62	-135	-135	-135	0
Unob. Bal. Trans. to Unexpired Acct. (-)	-1,125	0	-1,425	0	+1,425
Available Balance BOY (-)	-1,247	-8	-1,839	-207	+1,632
Available Balance EOY	+1,839	+8	+207	+207	0
Recycling Revenue (-)	-2	-22	-22	-22	0
Balance Expiring	+1,843	0	0	0	0
Budget Authority ^{3/}	\$147,784	\$156,447	\$149,798	\$160,733	+\$10,935
Rescission	+1,191	0	0	0	0
Transfer to Medical Administration ^{4/}	0	0	+6,849	0	-6,849
Appropriation	\$148,975	\$156,447	\$156,647	\$160,733	+\$4,086
Outlays	\$150,028	\$152,452	\$146,412	\$156,073	+\$9,661
1/ Includes \$50,000 from 2005 Emergency Hurricane Supplemental, P.L. 108-324.					
2/ Includes \$200,000 from 2006 Emergency Hurricane Supplemental.					
3/ The 2005 Budget Authority includes \$5,736,000 in non-pay information technology (IT), and beginning in 2006 all non-pay IT is funded and reflected in the Department's new IT appropriation.					
4/ Reflects a transfer of \$6,849,000 to Medical Administration for the purposes of adjusting the funding sources of VA's Central IT Fund in 2006.					

National Cemetery Gift Fund

Program Description

Public Law 93-43, as amended, codified in 38 U.S.C. 2407, provides authority to accept gifts and bequests for the purpose of beautifying national cemeteries, or which are determined to be beneficial to such cemeteries. Public Law 100-322, Section 346(g), not codified, provides authority to accept gifts and bequests for the purpose of the operation, maintenance, or improvement of the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona.

Fund Highlights (dollars in thousands)					
	2005 Actual	2006		2007 Estimate	Increase(+) Decrease(-)
		Budget Estimate	Current Estimate		
Appropriation (permanent, indefinite).....	\$159	\$85	\$120	\$120	\$0
Obligations	64	100	120	120	0
Outlays	96	100	120	120	0

Summary of Budget Request

The National Cemetery Gift Fund is a trust fund, which is financed from gifts and bequests from donors. No appropriation action is required.

Program Activity

Fund obligations are estimated to be \$120,000 in 2007. The fund was established and began accepting gifts and bequests as of October 1, 1989. The fund is used primarily for beautification and improvements to the cemetery grounds such as landscaping, walkways and benches. In this way, gift fund activity contributes to accomplishing our objective of ensuring that national cemeteries are shrines dedicated to preserving our nation's history, nurturing patriotism, and honoring the service and sacrifice veterans have made.

